

March 9, 2022

The Honorable Dick Sears
Chairman, Senate Committee on Judiciary
Vermont State House
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633

The Honorable Bobby Starr
Chairman, Senate Committee on Agriculture
Vermont State House
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633

Dear Chairmen Sears and Starr:

On behalf of Dairy Farmers of America (DFA), I urge your support of S.268, which will update Vermont’s Right to Farm (RTF) law, providing support and protections to farmers who operate in compliance with state and federal law. Vermont’s RTF statute was last updated in 2004, and we believe that revising this law to reflect current conditions will demonstrate the state’s continued commitment to supporting all farmers.

DFA is the nation’s largest and most diversified farmer-owned milk marketing cooperative which serves and is owned by more than 12,500 family farm-owners on more than 7,000 family farms — nearly 300 of which are in the state of Vermont. Those family farm-owners are invested in 84 processing facilities, across the United States, including the plant in St. Albans, Vt. Our plants produce a wide range of dairy products, including fluid milk, cheese, butter, ice cream and dairy ingredients.

Vermont’s dairy farmers have implemented many new technologies and practices over the past few decades to increase efficiency, improve water, air and soil health, generate on-farm renewable energy, and ensure profitability for the next generation. The state of Vermont has supported the adoption of new technology with tax incentives, grants, technical assistance and other resources. S.268 is a critical piece of the puzzle in that it provides protections to farms of all sizes in the state that adopt these new technologies.

As a farmer-owned cooperative, DFA has worked with farmer-leaders and policymakers in a number of states on similar initiatives. S. 268 includes some of the most important components of effective RTF laws. We applaud the state’s consideration of this legislation and strongly support its passage.

If DFA can provide more information about the importance of this legislation, our experience with this issue in other states, or more about DFA’s footprint in Vermont, please do not hesitate to contact Kiersten Bourgeois, Director, Marketing and Industry Relations at 802-793-4899.

Sincerely,



Brad Keating
Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Office, Northeast Area

CC: Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Senate Committee on Agriculture

